restriction enzymes, so as to be cloned into the vector pXL642 (described in CIP application No. 08/194,588) opened with the same restriction enzymes. The resulting plasmid, pRPA-BCAT15, was opened with the StuI and BsmI enzymes, and the 4.3 kb fragment was ligated with the purified 136 bp StuI-BsmI fragment of pRPA-BCAT4 (application FR 96/13077) so as to produce the plasmid pRPA-BCAT19. The partial sequencing of pRPA-BCAT19 confirmed the replacement of the codon of the Asp279 residue of the nitrilase with the codon of an Asn279 residue. The 1.2 kb EcoRI-XbaI fragment of pRPA-BCAT19 containing the P_{trp}: :RBScII: :*nitB* fusion was then cloned into the vector pRPA-BCAT28 opened with the same enzymes, so as to produce the 6.2 kb plasmid pRPA-BCAT29. The vector pRPA-BCAT28 was obtained by ligating the 3.9 kb SspI-ScaI fragment of pXL642 (CIP application No. 08/194,588) with the 2.1 kb SmaI fragment of pHP45ΩTc (Fellay *et al.*, 1987, Gene 52: 147-154) in order to replace the ampicillin resistance marker with the tetracycline resistance marker. In destroying the NdeI site close to the origin of replication of the plasmid pRPA-BCAT29 by partial NdeI digestion and the action of *E. coli* Polymerase I (Klenow Fragment), a plasmid pRPA-BCAT41 was obtained, the map of which is represented in Figure 1. The sequence of the expression cassette is represented by sequence identifier No. 2 (SEQ ID NO 2). *Alcaligenes faecalis* nitrilase is represented by SEQ ID NO: 3.--

Pages 21 and 22, delete the paragraph running from page 21, line 9 through page 22 line 9 and insert

--The polyamide hydrolase gene of *Comamonas acidovorans* N12 described in application WO 97/04083 *(pamII)* was cloned into the vector pBCAT41. This polyamide hydrolase gene was amplified by PCR in the form of a 1.26 kb DNA fragment, while

introducing, in the PCR primers, the EcoRI and NcoI restriction sites in the 5' position of the gene and the XbaI restriction site in the 3' position. This fragment was when treated successively with the EcoRI enzyme and Mung Bean nuclease. After extraction of the proteins with phenol-chloroform-isoamyl alcohol, the treatment was continued with an XbaI digestion. Similarly, the vector pRPA-BCAT41 was opened with the NdeI enzyme, and then treated with Mung Bean nuclease. After extraction of the proteins with phenol-chloroform-isoamyl alcohol, the treatment was continued with an XbaI digestion. After ligation of these two samples, the plasmid pRPA-BCAT43 was obtained: it contains the P_{trp} promoter and the RBScII binding site separated from the translation start codon of the *pamII* gene by the sequence:

AATACTTACACC (SEQ ID NO: 6).--

Pages 40 and 41, delete the paragraph running from page 40 line 7 through page 41 line 9, and insert

--After elimination of the unique NdeI site of the plasmid pRPA-BCAT30 by digestion and formation of blunt ends with polymerase I (Klenow fragment), the *trpR* gene was extracted from this latter plasmid in the form of an approximately 300 bp fragment prepared by treatment with the AatII enzyme followed by the action of polymerase I (Klenow fragment), and then, after inactivation of the reaction mixture, by digestion with the SacII enzyme. This fragment was cloned into the pRPA-BCAT66 plasmid after opening this plasmid with TthIII followed by treatment with polymerase I (Klenow fragment) and, after inactivation, with SacII. The plasmid pRPA-BCAT82 was thus obtained. Its origin of replication was replaced with that of the plasmid pRPA-BCAT41-531 by replacing the approximately 1.12 kb Bst1107I-Eam1105I fragment. The construct selected during this cloning, the plasmid pRPA-BCAT99, has an